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## Teachers with healthy minds cope well with changes

By [Dr Haniza Rais](#) - June 29, 2020 @ 12:10am

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Teachers are a priceless asset of the country. Their knowledge is spread to all individuals and professions across the country. -NSTP/MOHD YUSNI ARIFFIN

ON average, teachers in Malaysia serve 25 to 30 years before they call it a day and retire. This profession requires not just the dissemination of content of subject matters but also teaching skills.

One can make learning more meaningful only when the delivery is effective. It is the art of teaching that provides the creative aspect of teaching methodology.

So, not just anyone can teach. Trained and experienced teachers know how to deliver the content to various types of students, from the challenging to the gifted ones. They are the experts who know the right techniques, from the variety of teaching strategies based on the needs of their students.

It is challenging to teach in today's society. The demands from the stakeholders can be overwhelming considering the different needs of students in this millennium, not to mention the challenges of the Covid-19

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No doubt, the Education Ministry is keeping up with the developments in education around the world. The directives and expectations are translated in the curriculum and transferred to the school community to deliver. Thus teachers play the important role of following through the educational transformations.

Teachers are social beings, whose basic trait is to work with people; teach and assist the growth of children. Working with people does not make teachers immune to the challenges of dealing with difficult people, students, parents, subordinates or the superiors.

Teachers feel the effects of Covid-19 just like everybody else. When schools were closed during the Movement Control Order period, teachers were still expected to work with their students. New skills were acquired. Teaching was done online. Using Google Meet or Zoom, virtual teaching was expected to take place.

Among the new things learnt were Padlet, Edpuzzle and Pathbrite.

Keeping up with technology is not easy, yet they prepared for synchronous and asynchronous lessons to ensure students had the alternatives to learn.

Quizzes and take-home tasks were all communicated online. While some people complained of feeling bored and stressed at home due to a lack of activities during the MCO, teachers were busy preparing lessons to be uploaded online to ensure students stayed on task.

On top of that, teachers had to respond to the grievances of students who had issues with poor Internet connection and lack of proper tools and gadgets (computer or smartphone) for effective online learning. However, these didn't dampen the teachers' passion to stay connected with their students for the sake of education.

The demands to make adjustments through the new norms continue. Teachers are expected to have the readiness to start school after three months of MCO.

School preparedness demands teachers to do more tasks than just teaching.

School counsellors are expected to work closely with the teachers in

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providing psycho-emotional support to students. At the same time, it must be noted that teachers need support to stay mentally healthy.

As in any other profession, unexpected work demands can stress out teachers too. Thus they must take good care of their wellness. Teachers will make better educators if they take care of their mental wellbeing. Basically, eat well, rest well, sleep well and practise self-care.

Teachers are a priceless asset of the country. Their knowledge is spread to all individuals and professions across the country. Let us uplift their spirit by celebrating and appreciating teachers (at all levels) as the post-crisis frontliners for our children.

Although today is not Teachers Day, make teachers feel good today!

**The writer is a counselor educator at the Dept of Educ Psychology & Counseling, Kulliyah of Education, IIUM and a crisis counselor volunteer/executive committee of PERKAMA International.**

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the New Straits Times



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